

A digitizing project

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The Norwegian Polar Institute established in the fall of 2008 an institutional repository. We had no existing system to organize our digital publications, which were increasing in numbers.

One of the objects with the repository was to make all of the institute's publications available online. Only a few of the latest publications were digitally produced, the vast majority produced in the institute's nearly 100 year long history had to be digitized.

We decided to outsource this project, and came in contact with a small company that offered a very good price and appeared capable of doing this job. The references to earlier jobs were satisfactory.

As the project started and test scans were produced, everything seemed straightforward. But problems and challenges soon occurred. As both parts, especially the librarian, learned more, we realized that most of the problems could easily have been avoided. They were based on misunderstandings, and lack of knowledge of technical issues.

The idea of this talk is to tell other librarians our little story, and maybe help them avoid some of the frustration we experienced. Even if your institution is outsourcing a digitizing project, it is of most importance that you have the same basic understanding of technical issues as the company doing the job.